

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 CARACA 10178 301625Z

63

ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

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UNCLAS CARACAS 10178

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR CU VE

SUBJ: THREAT TO CUBAN-VENEZUELAN RELATIONS

REF: CARACAS 10153 AND 10125

1. SENSATIONALIST AFTERNOON DAILY EL MUNDO SEPTEMBER 29 FRONT-PAGES STORY THAT PRESIDENT PEREZ CONFERRED WITH FON-MINISTER ESCOVAR AND INTERIOR MINISTER LEPAGE MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 29 ABOUT THE CUBAN ASYLEE CASE, AND THAT ESCOVAR SUBSEQUENTLY VISITED THE CUBAN EMBASSY HERE, WHERE ESCOVAR RECEIVED ASSURANCES FROM CUBAN AMBASSADOR HERNANDEZ THAT THE TWO ASYLEES ARE NOT DEAD. STORY QUOTE CUBAN SECOND SECRETARY PEDRO GOMEZ AS SAYING THE ASYLEES THEMSELVES HAD NO POLITICAL IMPORTANCE AND THAT THEY HAD VOLUNTARILY LEFT THE VENEZUELAN EMBASSY IN HAVANA. STORY DESCRIBES ONE OF THE ASYLEES, ILEANA DE JESUS LOMBIDA, AS BEING PREGNANT.

2. EL MUNDO STATES NOBODY BELIEVES CUBAN EMBASSY'S ASSEVERATIONS, AND THAT CASE HAS CAUSED "GREAT COMMOTION" IN CARACAS. STORY QUOTES AN UNNAMED FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCE AS SAYING THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN CUBA AND VENEZUELA ARE REACHING A "CRITICAL POINT."
SHLAUDEMAN

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